



3612

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of

Akira TAKANO et al.

Serial No.: 10/076,346

Group Art Unit: 3612

Filed: February 19, 2002

Examiner: Hilary L. Gutman

For: BLOWER UNIT MOUNTING STRUCTURE AND METHOD FOR MOUNTING A
BLOWER UNIT

Honorable Commissioner of Patents
Alexandria, VA 22313 - 1450

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JAN 16 2004
GROUP 3600

APPLICANTS' INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during a personal interview on January 6, 2004.

During the personal interview, the following was discussed:

1. Claims 1 and 5.
2. The Derleth et al. reference, the Lindberg et al. reference, and the Lorenz et al. reference.
3. Applicants' representative and the Examiner discussed the Amendments to claims 1 and 5 in the Amendment After Final Rejection that was filed on November 26, 2003.
4. During the personal interview, the Applicants' representative explained that conventionally vehicles having a transversely extending steering support beam have had their blower units mounted to the steering support beam only after the steering support beam was mounted on the vehicle body. However, this causes great difficulty when mounting the blower unit in the vehicle in a narrow passenger compartment.

In particular, when fastening the blower unit to the toe board, the mechanic is forced

to do the fastening work from below the steering support beam in an uncomfortable posture. This causes an increase in the risk of mounting inaccuracy.

Additionally, it has been very difficult to fasten the blower unit, which has been incorrectly fastened to the toe board, to fasten the blower unit to the instrument panel.

In stark contrast, the present invention provides an instrument panel that includes a unitized component that includes a blower unit fixed to the lower panel and the steering support beam. By dividing the instrument panel into an upper panel and a lower panel, the unitized component may be assembled before installation in the vehicle and a mechanic may then easily align the ducts from the blower unit to an opening in the vehicle bulkhead and affix the blower unit to the vehicle body from the upper side of the lower panel (page 8, line 10 - page 11, line 23), rather, than from below the instrument panel as has conventionally been done.

In this manner, the present invention greatly improves the ease and accuracy of mounting the blower unit in the vehicle.

The Applicants' representative further explained that none of the applied references teach or suggest the features of the present invention including a unitized component that includes a blower unit fixed to the lower panel and the steering support beam.

5. No other pertinent matters were discussed.

6. Results of the Interview:

The Examiner agreed "act upon" the November 26, 2003 Amendment After Final Rejection.

Should the Examiner find the Application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed

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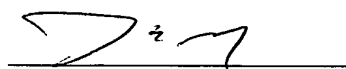
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below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 1/12/04



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